

# WHAT'S *New*

in the Metropolitan Police Department



*A weekly update for residents, visitors,  
and workers in the District of Columbia*

*Friday, April 25, 2003*

## TWENTY-EIGHT MORE OFFICERS HIT THE STREETS

DC residents have 28 more officers patrolling their neighborhoods, following officer graduation ceremonies Friday afternoon at the US Department of the Interior in Northwest. The 28 new officers include 22 members of Recruit Class 2002-6, plus six experienced officers from other police departments hired under the MPDC's lateral hire program. Five of the lateral officers are bilingual (English-Spanish) members who were hired from police agencies in Puerto Rico, as part of a major effort to increase Latino representation in the MPDC. All 28 officers will be assigned to neighborhood patrols among the seven police districts. With national Police Week less than two weeks away, Chief Ramsey reminded the new officers that policing remains a dangerous profession, as evidenced by the 15,000 names inscribed on the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial in DC. The Chief told the graduates that "the greatest tribute to our fallen heroes lies within each and every one of us—in our own commitment, bravery, selflessness, ideals, our service and, at times, our sacrifice."

- ① Learn more about police career opportunities in the MPDC:  
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/about/employ/officer.shtm>

## AS TRAFFIC FATALITIES INCREASE NATIONWIDE, DC SEES DRAMATIC REDUCTIONS IN TRAFFIC DEATHS

As the number of people killed in traffic crashes nationwide increased in 2002, DC continues to buck the trend with significantly fewer people killed on DC roads and highways over the past year-and-a-half. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) reported this past week that an estimated 42,850 people died as a result of traffic crashes in 2002, an increase of almost 2 percent from the 2001 figure and the nation's highest fatality level since 1990. In DC, however, traffic fatalities declined by nearly 30 percent in 2002, from 71 fatalities in 2001 to 50 in 2002. And the trend has continued into 2003: as of April 25, traffic fatalities are down another 40 percent when compared with the same time of 2002. Traffic safety officials point to several factors that have contributed to the reduction in fatalities: strong seat belt and child safety seat laws, tough enforcement of those laws, extensive public education and new efforts to combat aggressive driving, including the use of photo enforcement.

- ① Learn more about the MPDC's traffic safety programs, and get up-to-date traffic fatality data, by clicking on:  
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/info/traffic/traffic.shtm>
- ① Read NHTSA's news release on the 2002 traffic fatality estimates:  
<http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/nhtsa/announce/press/pressdisplay.cfm?year=2003&filename=pr13-03.html>

## CHIEF RAMSEY DECLARES MORE "DRUG FREE ZONES"

Chief Ramsey this past week declared two additional "drug free zones," as the MPDC resumed its enforcement of the Anti-Loitering/Drug Free Zone law. The law allows police to disperse groups of two or more individuals congregating for the purpose of illegal drug activity within the designated drug free zone. The latest drug free zones last through Monday, April 28, in areas of PSA 102 and PSA 707. At least two additional drug free zones a week are planned for the coming months, with each designation lasting for no longer than 120 hours according to law. The Anti-Loitering/Drug Free Zone Act of 1996 provides that, while a drug free zone is in effect, it is unlawful for a group of two or more persons to congregate

- ① For additional information on the MPDC's enforcement of the law—including details on current and past drug free zone designations—go to:  
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/info/comm/drugfreezone.shtm>

in a public space or property within that area for the purpose of selling, purchasing or using illegal drugs. Persons in violation of the law first will be warned by a police officer that they are in a drug free zone and will be directed to disperse and depart the area. Failure to obey the officer's instruction will result in arrest, without a second warning. Offenders convicted under the law are subject to a fine of up to \$300, imprisonment for up to 180 days, or both.

## MPDC HOLDING COMMUNITY MEETINGS ON IMPROVING THE PSA SYSTEM

The MPDC is holding a series of community meetings in all seven police districts to get residents' comments and suggestions on improving the Department's Police Service Area (PSA) system. The MPDC is currently conducting a detailed study of the PSA system, and Chief Ramsey has said that community input is an important component of that effort. First introduced in June 1997, the PSAs are the organizational structure used to carry out the MPDC's "Policing for Prevention" strategy. There are currently 83 PSAs in the city, divided among the seven police districts. Each PSA is led by a lieutenant and includes a team of sergeants and police officers who respond to calls for service within the PSA and who work with other government agencies and the community to identify and solve neighborhood crime and disorder problems.

## NEWS & NOTES

**Youth Division Open House.** In recognition of Child Abuse Prevention Month, the MPDC's Youth and Preventive Services Division will offer information, child identification kits and refreshments during its Open House on Saturday, April 26, from 11 am to 3 pm, at 1700 Rhode Island Avenue, NE. Details at <http://mpdc.dc.gov/news/news.asp?sid=2051>.

**Charity Basketball Tournament Aids Young Sniper Victim.** MPDC's Emergency Response Team and the Golden Child Award Foundation host a basketball tournament this weekend at St. Albans School in Northwest to benefit 13-year-old Iran Brown, who was shot last October outside his Prince George's County Middle School, allegedly by the so-called "Beltway Snipers." Details at <http://mpdc.dc.gov/news/news.asp?sid=2046>.

**Ask the Chief.** Chief Ramsey takes phone calls and e-mails during his monthly program on WTOP radio (1500 AM) on Thursday, May 1, from 10-11 am.

**Latino Community Assembly.** The MPDC's Latino Advisory Council will sponsor a Latino Community Assembly on Saturday, May 3, from 9 am to noon, at the Josephine Butler Parks Center, 2437 15th Street, NW. Coinciding with the 12th anniversary of the Mount Pleasant disturbances, the Assembly is designed to promote greater communication and cooperation among DC's Latino residents and the MPDC. For more information, call Enrique Rivera (202) 727-2490 or Eugenio Arene at (202) 328-9451.

**School Safety Patrol Parade.** DC will host the annual AAA National School Safety Patrol Parade in downtown DC on Saturday, May 3. This event recognizes the thousands of School Safety Patrol members who do a magnificent job of watching out for the safety of students walking to school or boarding buses. For details, call AAA Mid-Atlantic at (703) 222-4100.

- ① The meetings will take place through May 6th. For a complete list of dates, times and locations, visit:  
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/news/news.asp?sid=2050>
- ① Findings from the community meetings, as well as other information about the PSAs, will be discussed at Mayor Williams's Crime Forum II, scheduled for May 10 at Scripture Cathedral, 810 O Street, NW. Details at:  
<http://dc.gov/mayor/news/advisory.asp?id=408&mon=200304>
- ① Learn about the roles and responsibilities of the PSA teams under Policing for Prevention by visiting:  
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/pfp/psateam.shtm>
- ① Not sure what PSA you live or work in? Use the "PSA Finder" on the MPDC website to find out your PSA:  
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/info/districts/districts.shtm>

## DATA BOX

Homicides (as of 4/25/03)

- 2003: 78
- 2002: 65
- % Change: +21.5%

Arrests (week ending 4/19/03)

- Total: 684
  - Drugs: 80
  - Prostitution/Sex Offenses: 40
- Firearm Recoveries (as of 4/22/03)
- Total: 599
  - April: 123

Traffic Fatalities (as of 4/25/03)

- 2003: 12
- 2002: 20
- % Change: -40.0%

**Information, ideas, or comments about this service?** Send an e-mail to **KEVIN MORISON**, MPDC's Director of Corporate Communications, at [kevin.morison@dc.gov](mailto:kevin.morison@dc.gov). Would you like to have this information e-mailed to you? Just go to our Website and register with **Crimereports.com**.

**mpdc.dc.gov**